Obscene programmes on Foreign Channels

†*72. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to lack of any effective Government's control on the foreign channels they are telecasting all types of fair, unfair as well as obscene programmes;

(b) if so, what concrete steps Government is taking in this regard;

(c) whether Government propose to allow telecasting facility to the registered channels only through "Cable or Direct to Home (DTH)" service;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) the steps Government would initiate to have control on the unregistered channels?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) The Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995 prescribes that all television channels transmitted/ retransmitted through the cable network are required to adhere to the programme and advertisement code prescribed thereunder. These codes prohibit telecast of any obscene or vulgar programme/advertisement. The Government has taken the following steps to ensure adherence to these codes:—

(i) The Central Government has constituted an inter ministerial committee to look into violations of the codes. On recommendation of the Committee action is taken against channels for violating the codes. This is an on going process.

(ii) Action for violation of codes can also be taken by any authorized officer *i.e.* DM, SDM or Commissioner of Police or any other officer notified in the official gazette by the Central Government or State Government under the Cable Act.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(iii) State Government has been asked to set up district level monitoring Committees to look into violations of the codes.

(iv) Government has recently issued downlinking guidelines to provide for registration of all television channels downlinking into India. The terms and conditions for downlinking satellite television channels also prescribe adherence to the programme and advertising codes.

(c) to (e) In pursuance of the downlinking guidelines, the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 and DTH guidelines are being separately amended to provide, that no cable operator or DTH operator shall carry/ distribute any unregistered satellite television channel through his network.

Foreign Universities

*73. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number and name of the foreign universities operating in the country through centres/franchises and the courses they are offering;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are not able to monitor functioning of the foreign universities in India and the students are largely clueless about quality of such centres and courses; and

(c) how Government plan to formalize the present informal arrangements regarding functioning of the foreign universities indicating the details thereof and time frame therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) to (c) A Committee of experts under the Chairmanship of Prof. C.N.R. Rao was constituted by the Government to study various issues pertaining to foreign universities. The Committee in its recommendations, has suggested that operation of foreign education providers be allowed after putting in place suitable regulatory and monitoring mechanism at national level. While the Central Government has not taken a final view in this regard, a draft Bill containing the provisions to regulate the entry and operations of foreign education providers was circulated to State Governments and various stakeholders seeking their opinion on the Bill. The Government intends to put a regulatory framework on foreign education providers at the earliest possible.